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runagate, whose moral character serves only to encourage vice and immorality in the neighbourhood where he resides, and whose mode of teaching serves rather to repress than encourage a proper relish for intellectual improvement. But was the plan of Simplex, or one of a similar nature, adopted, these inconveniences would soon be done away, and a valuable store of information would be brought within the reach of the poorest peasant in the nation; while the middle ranks would have a greater inducement, and every opportunity they could desire, of refining their tastes, improving their understandings, and of laying in a precious store of information for their succeeding years; and peace and prosperity, with every social virtue, would soon flourish in our island. But although the plan should not, at this time, meet with that encouragement from government, which it so justly deserves, yet let us fondly cherish the pleasing expectation, that, at a more distant period, when the present war shall be terminated, some great and godlike genius shall arise in the British senate, and get an act passed for establishing a system of national instruction in every section of the British empire. Such a statesman would deserve more from his country, than all the warriors and politicians from the days of Alexander the Great to the present hour.

G.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

THE interest which your periodical work takes in every thing that relates to your country, induces an Irish visitor at Cushendall to offer you a topographic sketch of that village.

Local situation, natural curiosities, adjacent antiquities and ruins, as well as the morals, manners, and language of the people, combine to render Cushendall a place of some interest.

It is pleasantly situated, in a valley on the sea-coast, thirty-six miles from Belfast, and about ten from Fair-head, the most northern promontory in Ireland. It contains sixty houses, and three hundred inhabitants. Seven of these houses are licensed for

the sale of groceries and spirits. Eight annual fairs are held here. Its inhabitants are generally farmers on a small scale, which, aided by traffic, fishing, and labour, produces a tolerably comfortable support for their families.

A plain, but commodious parish church stands at a convenient distance from the north, and a chapel of a similar description, for Catholic worship, at the south end of the village. An established post arrives three times in each week, for the accommodation of this village, and its vicinity.

In speaking of the manners of those villagers, my mind fully acquits me of adulation, when I assert that the inhabitants of Cushendall have a fair claim to a full share of that character for hospitality, for which the Irish nation is so justly celebrated. They are attentive, kind and obliging to the stranger who sojourns among them; but, while he may freely commit his person and his purse to their disposal, the friend too refined morality will too frequently have his feelings wounded by the profanation of the Divine Name.—Ah! my countrymen—children of kindness, while you are exact in your duty to man, remember also what you owe to your God.—Ye daughters of Erin, whose lips are so delicately formed for love and praise, defile them not with profanation.

Being from the bottom of my heart an Irishman, you see that in this sketch I retain the ancient name of the village, Cushendall. Although *calla*, in the Irish language signifies a *swan*, yet tradition says it obtained this name from a predatory Scot, who fell by the hand of Ossian, named Dallas, whose tomb many of the natives recollect to have seen on the coast; but all traces of it are now obliterated, by a road made some years ago by the shore to Cushendun. This village is also called *Newton-glens*, a name, I understand, lately given it; I pretend not to say what motive effected this change. I know it has been the practice of the Anglo-Irish, in the last century, to deface, as much as possible, every thing that is national; but this, it may be presumed, could not be the motive of the present proprietor; for, it is but justice to him to say, that the

inhabitants of this village represent him as the friend of the poor, and an active, impartial magistrate.

Around this village the antiquarian may see many objects to exercise his fertile and inquiring genius. At the north end of the town, on a commanding eminence, stands *Court Martin*. Time, with his defacing hand, as well as the piratic grasp of the unfeeling modern builder, have nearly delapidated this once proud structure; so much only remains as to show you, that many internal apartments of considerable dimensions, surrounded with an octagonal massive wall, of 160 feet in circumference, once adorned this beautiful scenick hill.

John M'Bride, the hoary chronicler of the village, who breathed the air of the last century for fully eighty years, informs me that it was built by a Martin M'Owen; and that he recollects, in his early days, to have seen some fragments of the tower in a field on the opposite side of the road, still called the watch-field. There is also the remains of a circular tower on the sea-beach, on the south side of the river *Ban eoghan da ealku*, calculated to command a full view of the adjoining bay. Opposite Martin's Court, on the same south side of the river, stands *Cnocan-a-chich*, i. e. gallows-hill. Here was a cave of considerable size, but it has suffered, and is now entirely destroyed.

In the same direction, not far distant, rises the majestic and beautiful *Luirg Eadain*, exhibiting its semi-circular *tracked-face*, forming a natural fortification on the east, south, and north sides, and the remains of a tripple fosse to the west, shows that our forefathers availed themselves of the security which this highly-elevated mountain was by nature so well calculated to afford them from their *Hebridean* and other foes. The aged villagers here know it by the name of *fort clana Mourne*, and say that Fion M'Cumhal with his *clanabuiskin*, possessed himself of it, and there resided for some time.

This eminent hill commands an extensive view of the Scotch coast and islands, as well as the intervening channel. On its south side lies the picturesque *Glen-aircamh*, with its rich

its numerous cascades, and its meandering stream, issuing into the sea at *Naireamh*, or Red-bay, adjoining which a ruined castle, with several caves, claims the attention of the curious traveller. One of these has been for many years occupied by a blacksmith; in another, resides a solitary female, who compassionately regales the weary traveller with a glass of *Innisceoghain* (*Innishowen*) to enable him to gain the summit of the steep ascent.

To the north-east, in a deep valley, close to the ocean, stands the ruins of *Lade church*. Tradition gives it the name of a monastery. This sequestered spot, according to the practise of our Grecian ancestors, doubtless was chosen as favourable to contemplation: its dim lights, a vault of 24 by 21 feet, together with the many monuments of mortality that surround it, proclaim its ancient date.

The traveller of taste who approaches this place, by the way of Ballymena, must be peculiarly gratified, as he passes the water-fall at Esstochar bridge, measuring at least 36 perpendicular feet, and exhibiting regular columns, bearing a faint resemblance to the basaltic of the Giant's Causeway; as he proceeds, *Sleibh Buailidh*, *Sleibh an Rad*, and *Cnoc-an-feart*, with their elevated conic tops, appear in succession to his view.

It would exceed my limits to describe the spacious caves of Cushendun, obviously the effect of a volcanic eruption; also the bold, yet verdant coast from thence to *Torr-head*, generally lost to the traveller by an impervious, and shamefully neglected road.

Around this village the researching eye is frequently gratified with the relics of Druidical circles, cromliacs, rude altars, or the tombs of heroes, calling up to the mind the political and religious characters of those who lived in distant ages.

The grasses appear to be such as are common on the other parts of the northern coast. The strong cock-foot, boldly pushing itself to the verge of the ocean; the meadow fox-tail, rare; but the sweet scented vernal every where, and even plenty on the top of the sublime *Luirg Eadain*.

The springs around this village, and

on the sides of the neighbouring mountains are plenty, generally mineral, and might be diverted by the hand of the agriculturalist, to the great improvement of his grasses.

The state of cultivation is very low in this vicinity; few inclosures—the ground partially tilled, and little attention to planting, yet Dr. M'Donnell, Captain Richardson, and a few others, have lately set good examples, which it is to be hoped will be followed (not slowly) by minor characters.

The mineralogist may acquire a useful lesson in directing his researches for that valuable material, limestone: he will see, by viewing the extensive range of this bold coast, that it lies deeply buried beneath two strata of other stone.

The breed of cattle here is of rather an inferior kind, pigs excepted, which have been much improved of late by the introduction of the Berkshire breed, by the Rev. Mr. Dobbs. Might it not be advantageous to the community, if this laudable example was followed up by gentlemen of property, with respect to other useful domestic animals.

Permit me to conclude this sketch by asking, through the medium of your publication, the inhabitants of this lovely shore, if more industry would not tend to promote personal and domestic comfort?

A sphere of exertion now presents itself, in a factory nearly completed, for the purpose of spinning linen-yarn, presenting to the eye of the mind the pleasing prospect, under proper regulations, of improving both their wealth and their morals.

I am, Mr. Editor, yours, &c.
July 12, 1809. POPPICOLA.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

Extract of an Essay upon the origin of Amber. Philosophical Transactions, No. 472. By the late Dr. John Fothergill; with some additional observations by John Cookley Lettsome, M. D.

AFTER all that has been wrote upon the subject of Amber, its origin is yet in a great measure unknown. Several ingenious men have searched into this affair upon the spot where the amber is principally gather-

ed: they have related their observations with great candour; they have given us the conclusions they drew from the facts they discovered; yet without satisfying us entirely about many particulars.

But as a knowledge of the nature of things can only be acquired from the things themselves, I have carefully collected every material fact I could meet with, from those who were best acquainted with the natural history of this subject, and whose industry and accurateness in observing, and good faith in relating their observations, have been generally esteemed unexceptionable. Of these I shall only mention *Wigandus*, *Hartman*, and *Sendelius*, the last who has written, as far as I know, professedly on this subject.

The evidence which these gentlemen affords us, I have endeavoured to throw together, in the most natural order I could, without respect to any hypothesis. But as this enumeration of facts admits of no abridgment, my papers would take up too much room in your memoirs, therefore I can only refer to the essay itself. Upon this foundation of facts is built a discussion of the following problems:

1. Whether Amber is not strictly a marine production; or is reduced by some quality of the sea-water into the condition we find it in? or,
2. Whether it is not to be considered only as a bituminous body, generated in the bowels of the earth? or, lastly,
3. Whether it is not, in its origin, a vegetable production, a resin; but changed into its present form by a mineral acid?

It will only be necessary in this place to mention, that, after having shown the difficulty of maintaining the two first, I have undertaken to support the last of these opinions.

I endeavour to make it appear, that amber was, in its origin, a vegetable resin*; the product, perhaps, of the

* From the subsequent observations on mixing oils, resinous and pinguous substances, it appears that the author retained the opinion he had thus early adopted.